

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 21, line 7 with the following rewritten paragraph:

A13
Fig. 19 is a graph showing results of the measurements of a nitrogen content and an oxygen content to a depth from the surface of a substrate in the first embodiment of the substrate having a hard decorative coating film according to the invention and the process for producing the same.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 21, line 12 with the following rewritten paragraph:

A14
Fig. 20 is a graph showing results of the measurements of a nitrogen content and an oxygen content to a depth from the surface of a substrate in the second embodiment of the substrate having a hard decorative coating film according to the invention and the process for producing the same.

Please replace the section heading beginning at page 24, line 10 with the following rewritten section heading:

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Please delete the section heading "EFFECT OF THE INVENTION" which begins on page 141 at line 27.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claim 4 as follows:

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4. A process for surface treatment of tableware, comprising:
heating titanium or titanium alloy tableware in a vacuum chamber to anneal the tableware,

hardening the tableware by introducing a mixed gas containing nitrogen as a main component and an oxygen component into the vacuum chamber after the heating to anneal step, and further heating the vacuum chamber at a temperature of 700 to 800°C for a given period of

time under a given reduced pressure to diffuse nitrogen and oxygen inside the titanium or titanium alloy tableware from the surface so as to form a solid solution,

cooling the titanium or titanium alloy tableware to room temperature after the

hardening treatment step, and

polishing the tableware after the cooling step.

Please amend claim 14 as follows:

14. A process for surface treatment of tableware, comprising:

placing titanium or titanium alloy tableware in a vacuum chamber, evacuating the vacuum chamber, then introducing an inert gas into the vacuum chamber, and heating the tableware under reduced pressure to anneal the tableware,

hardening the tableware by evacuating the vacuum chamber to remove the inert gas after the heating to anneal step, then introducing a mixed gas containing nitrogen as a main component and an oxygen component into the vacuum chamber, adjusting the pressure in the vacuum chamber to atmospheric pressure, and further heating the vacuum chamber to a temperature of 700 to 800°C for a given period of time to diffuse nitrogen and oxygen inside the titanium or titanium alloy tableware from the surface so as to form a solid solution,

cooling the titanium or titanium alloy tableware to room temperature after the hardening treatment step, and

polishing the tableware after the cooling step.

Please amend claim 21 as follows:

21. The tableware as claimed in claim 1, wherein the first hardened layer is coated with a hard coating film.

Please amend claim 23 as follows:

23. The tableware as claimed in claim 21, wherein the hard coating film shows a gold color tone.

Please amend claim 26 as follows:

A19 26. The tableware as claimed in claim 1, wherein the surface of the first hardened layer has been polished.

Please amend claim 34 as follows:

34. The substrate having a hard decorative coating film as claimed in claim 27, wherein the thickness of the hard decorative coating film is in the range of 0.1 to 3.0 μm .

Please amend claim 35 as follows:

A20 35. The substrate having a hard decorative coating film as claimed in claim 27, wherein the surface of the hard decorative coating film shows a gold color tone.

Please amend claim 37 as follows:

37. The substrate having a hard decorative coating film as claimed in claim 27, which is a camera body, a cellular telephone body, a portable radio body, a video camera body, a lighter body or a personal computer main body.

Please amend claim 38 as follows:

38. A process for producing a substrate having a hard decorative coating film, comprising:

heating a substrate comprising titanium or a titanium alloy in a vacuum chamber to anneal the substrate,

hardening the substrate by introducing a mixed gas containing nitrogen as a main component and an oxygen component into the vacuum chamber, and further heating the vacuum chamber to a temperature of 700 to 800°C for a given period of time under given reduced pressure to diffuse nitrogen and oxygen inside the titanium or titanium alloy substrate from the surface so as to form a solid solution,

cooling the titanium or titanium alloy substrate to room temperature,

polishing the substrate surface,

washing the substrate,
placing the substrate in a vacuum chamber and evacuating the vacuum chamber,
introducing argon into the vacuum chamber, ionizing the argon and ion
bombarding the substrate surface,
forming by sputtering an intermediate layer comprising a metal or a metallic
carbide on the substrate surface,
exhausting the argon the vacuum chamber and introducing a gas containing
carbon into the vacuum chamber, and
generating a plasma in the vacuum chamber and forming by plasma CVD
treatment a diamond-like carbon coating film on the surface of the intermediate layer.

Please amend claim 43 as follows:

43. A process for producing a substrate having a hard decorative coating film,
comprising:

heating a substrate comprising titanium or a titanium alloy in a vacuum chamber to
anneal the substrate,

hardening the substrate by introducing a mixed gas containing nitrogen as a main
component and an oxygen component into the vacuum chamber, and heating the vacuum
chamber to a temperature of 700 to 800°C for a given period of time under given reduced
pressure to diffuse nitrogen and oxygen inside the titanium or titanium alloy substrate from the
surface so as to form a solid solution,

cooling the titanium or titanium alloy substrate to room temperature,

polishing a surface of the substrate,

washing the substrate,

placing the substrate in a vacuum chamber and evacuating the vacuum chamber,

introducing argon into the vacuum chamber, ionizing the argon and ion bombarding the substrate surface, and

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forming a hard decorative coating film comprising a nitride, a carbide, an oxide, a nitrido-carbide or a nitrido-carbido-oxide of a 4a, 5a or 6a Group element of the periodic table on the substrate surface by ion plating or sputtering.

A23
Please amend claim 45 as follows:

45. Cutlery comprising a working part and a grip, wherein the grip is provided with a floating means.

Please amend claim 49 as follows:

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49. Cutlery comprising a working part and a grip,
wherein the working part comprises a titanium material,
the grip comprises a thermoplastic resin having a hollow part, and
the working part is an integrally constituted part formed by insert molding using the thermoplastic resin.

Please amend claim 50 as follows:

50. Cutlery as claimed in claim 45, which is one of a spoon, a fork or a knife.

IN THE ABSTRACT:

Please replace the section heading beginning at page 159, line 1 with the following rewritten section heading:

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 159 line 2 with the following rewritten paragraph:

A25
Tableware of Ti or a Ti alloy having a surface hard layer comprising a first hardened layer in which nitrogen and oxygen are diffused so as to form a solid solution and a second hardened layer which is formed in a region deeper than the first hardened layer. The